



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 12, 2010

NATIONAL TOUR OF THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL
DREAMGIRLS
MAKES IT'S COLUMBUS PREMIERE
AT THE PALACE THEATRE FEBRUARY 16-21

Full of onstage joy and backstage drama, this all-new production of the Broadway musical ***DREAMGIRLS*** tells the story of an up-and-coming, 1960s singing girl group, and the triumphs and tribulations that come with fame and fortune.

Presented by CAPA and Broadway Across America, *DREAMGIRLS* comes to the Palace Theatre (34 W. Broad St.) February 16-21. Show times are Tuesday, February 16, 8 pm; Wednesday, February 17, 8 pm; Thursday, February 18, 8 pm; Friday, February 19, 8 pm; Saturday, February 20, 2 pm and 8 pm; and Sunday, February 21, 1 pm and 6:30 pm. **Tickets** are \$69.50, \$64.50, \$49.50, \$44.50, \$27.50, and \$22.50 at the Ohio Theatre Ticket Office (39 E. State St.), all Ticketmaster outlets, and www.ticketmaster.com. To purchase tickets by phone, please call (614) 469-0939 or (800) 745-3000. The Palace Theatre Ticket Office will open two hours prior to the performance.

Hopeful talents Deena Jones, Lorrell Robinson, and Effie White are performing as The Dreamettes when ambitious agent Curtis Taylor, Jr. discovers them. He lands them a job as backup singers for the soul and rock 'n' roll sensation James "Thunder" Early and begins to guide their quickly rising career. However, when the beautiful Deena emerges as the star of the group rather than the full-voiced Effie, the girls are brought to a personal and professional crossroads.

DREAMGIRLS will introduce Moya Angela as Effie White, and feature as The Dreams, Syesha Mercado (Deena Jones), Adrienne Warren (Lorrell Robinson), and Margaret Hoffman (Michelle

Morris) with Chaz Lamar Shepherd as Curtis Taylor, Jr., Chester Gregory as James “Thunder” Early, Trevon Davis as C.C. White, and Milton Craig Nealy as Marty Madison. The cast of 26 also features Tallia Brinson, Felicia Boswell, Ronald Duncan, Patrice Covington, Talitha Farrow, Brittney Griffin, James Harkness, Robert Hartwell, Eric Jackson, Chauncey Jenkins, Jared Joseph, Nikki Kimbrough, Brittany Lewis, Douglas Lyons, Kimberly Marable, Jarran Muse, Amaker Smith, and Marc Spaulding.

DREAMGIRLS is directed and choreographed by Robert Longbottom with co-choreography by Shane Sparks, scenic design by Robin Wagner, costume design by William Ivey Long, lighting design by Ken Billington, sound design by Acme Sound Partners, and media design by Howard Werner for Lightswitch. *DREAMGIRLS* features music by Henry Krieger and lyrics and book by Tom Eyer with additional material by Willie Reale. *DREAMGIRLS* is produced by John Breglio for Vienna Waits Productions.

The original Broadway production of *DREAMGIRLS* opened December 20, 1981, at the Imperial Theatre and won six Tony Awards and three Drama Desk Awards in 1982. It closed on Broadway August 11, 1985, after 1,521 performances. The original Broadway production was directed by Michael Bennett and choreographed by Bennett and Michael Peters.

DREAMGIRLS was adapted into a motion picture by DreamWorks Pictures and Paramount Pictures, and opened in December 2006. The film won two Academy Awards, five Golden Globes, and two Screen Actor’s Guild Awards in 2007 in addition to a Grammy Award for Best Song written for a Motion Picture (“Love You I Do”). The most popular song from the film, “Listen,” has been incorporated into the new stage version of *DREAMGIRLS* as a stirring Act II duet for Deena and Effie.

This all-new production of *DREAMGIRLS* premiered at Harlem’s legendary Apollo Theater in New York City on November 22, 2009, before embarking on an international tour.

www.DreamgirlsOnStage.com

Biographies

Moya Angela (*Effie White*) joins the cast from *The Lion King’s* Gazelle and Cheetah tours (Disney). Her roles included Rafiki and Shenzi. She is a native of Indianapolis, IN, where she won two Encore

Awards in her roles as Sara in *Ragtime* and Adapearle in *The Wiz*. Moya made her NYC debut with the company of *Dreamgirls*.

Syeshia Mercado (*Deena Jones*) As a recording artist, Syeshia released a single with two-time Grammy nominated jazz legend Boney James and has begun preparations for her first record, collaborating with a host of prominent writers and producers, including Grammy-winner Diane Warren, Scott Cutler, Anne Preven, Steve Diamond, Chris Rojas, and many more. She came to national attention as the second runner-up in the seventh season of FOX's "American Idol." She also participated in the subsequent "American Idol" LIVE Tour 2008, performing 53 concerts in 49 cities both in the US and Canada. Syeshia attended the Manatee School for the Arts and was a theater major at Florida International University in Miami.

Chaz Lamar Shepherd (Curtis Taylor, Jr.). Philadelphia's Chaz Shepherd has co-starred in many TV shows (*7th Heaven*, *The Parkers*, *The Game*) and as Harpo on Broadway's *The Color Purple*. After being on the Billboard charts three times in 2009, Chaz's soul/R&B album will be released during the *Dreamgirls* tour. Chaz's gospel work was Grammy nominated in 2009.

Chester Gregory (*James "Thunder" Early*) An award-winning actor/performer/singer/songwriter, Chester is ecstatic about being Jimmy in *Dreamgirls* and returning to the world famous Apollo Theater where he made his NY debut as Jackie Wilson in *The Jackie Wilson Story* (Jeff, AUDELCO, BTAA, and Black Excellence Awards). Broadway: *Hairspray* (Seaweed), *Cry-Baby* (Dupree), and *Tarzan* (Terk). Other credits include *Hairspray* (movie) and performing for Michael Jackson. Chester has a BFA from Columbia Chicago. His music is available at www.ChesterGregory.com.

Adrienne Warren (Lorrell Robinson) is a recent graduate of Marymount Manhattan College. New York Theatre: *The Wiz* (Dorothy understudy for Encores! Summer Stars). Regional: *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Cats*, *Big River*, and the 25th anniversary of *Dreamgirls* starring Jennifer Holliday. Training: Ann Reinking's Broadway Theatre Project. Trans Siberian Orchestra 2008-2009 Winter Tour (Featured Vocalist).

Trevon Davis (C.C. White) is thrilled to be a part of this production of *Dreamgirls*. A talented vocalist and songwriter, Trevon continues to make a name for himself with his casting as C.C. He was one of the seven finalists on BET's *Sunday Best* hosted by Kirk Franklin, and he also appeared in MTV's hit series *Making the Band* produced by Sean "Diddy" Combs.

Margaret Hoffman (*Michelle Morris*) recently graduated from Sam Houston State University, obtaining a BFA in Musical Theatre. While attending school, Margaret has performed in several theatrical and entertainment events at the premiere theatres of Houston, TX, such as The Ensemble Theatre and Theatre Under the Stars.

Milton Craig Nealy (*Marty Madison*) is happy to be a part of this new production of *Dreamgirls*, having been in the original Broadway and 1987 revival productions. He also created the roles of Agwe in *Once on This Island* and Four-Eyed Moe in *Five Guys Named Moe* on Broadway. Other Broadway credits include: *Caroline, or Change*, John in *Miss Saigon* (as well as the London and Australian productions), *Mail*, and the revival of *Ain't Misbehavin'*. National tours: *The Full Monty* (also in Australia), Judas in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (20th anniversary tour), and *Sing, Mahalia, Sing* starring Jennifer Holliday. Milton won the Best of Westword Award for his performance as Jacob in *La Cage Aux Folles*. Films include *The Blues Brothers*.

CALENDAR LISTING

CAPA and BROADWAY ACROSS AMERICA present *DREAMGIRLS*

February 16-21, Palace Theatre (34 W. Broad St.)

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www.capa.com

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The **Ohio Arts Council** helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. CAPA also appreciates the support of **the Abigail Simpson, Grace K. and Robert L. Rohe, and Martha G. Staub Funds of the Columbus Foundation**, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the **Greater Columbus Arts Council**, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973.

About CAPA

Owner/operator of downtown Columbus' magnificent, historic theatres (Ohio Theatre, Palace Theatre, Southern Theatre) and manager of the Riffe Center Theatre Complex, Lincoln Theatre, Valentine Theatre (Toledo, OH), and Shubert Theater (New Haven, CT), CAPA is a not-for-profit, award-winning presenter of national and international performing arts and entertainment now celebrating 40 years of service. For more information, visit www.capa.com.

About Broadway Across America

Broadway Across America is owned and operated by British theatre producer John Gore (CEO) and entertainment industry veteran Thomas B. McGrath (Chairman). Broadway Across America presents first-class, touring Broadway musicals and plays, family productions, and other live events throughout a network of 43 North American cities. Broadway Across America is also dedicated to the development and production of new and diverse live theatre for productions on Broadway, across America, and throughout the world. Broadway Across America most recently produced the Broadway productions of *HAIR*, *WEST SIDE STORY*, and Irving Berlin's *WHITE CHRISTMAS*. Upcoming productions include *MINSKY'S*, *PROMISES, PROMISES*, *MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET*, and the West End production of *BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S*. Touring productions include Nickelodeon's *STORYTIME ADVENTURES* featuring Dora the Explorer and *DREAMGIRLS*. For more information or to purchase tickets through an authorized agent, go to www.BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com.

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